

SOARing

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NEWS FROM THE SOAR INSTITUTE

SOARING ISSUE 8

Keys to Student Success

In the spring term of 2013, we began to ask what we could do to promote student success campus-wide. Faculty and staff were asked for input on “keys” to student success. A team was formed to begin reviewing the suggestions. Team members included Susan Bamberg, Annette Cook, Holly Elliott, Kathryn Gidley, Gladys Hill, Tim Law, Channing Marlowe, and Kevin Windham. The team began reviewing all the suggestions while considering how often each key was suggested.

Five keys rose to the top. The team researched codes of student conduct and student handbooks from other colleges as well as our own. After many edits, a definition for each key was crafted. In August 2013, the final product was endorsed by the Executive Council.

The next step was to create a logo to represent the keys. Jaia Chen agreed to have students in second-year art class design sample logos for the keys. Logos were submitted, and the selected logo was designed by Amethyst Smith. The logo was tweaked and digitalized for use on print materials and media.

Because the team believed in the importance of these keys, the group was committed to presenting the keys in a memorable way. The team continued to wait for the College’s new leader and an appropriate time to reveal the keys. With Start–Stay–Succeed beginning last year and the Phi Theta Kappa Completion Campaign getting under way this past fall, the time seemed right.

On February 20, 2015, the Keys to Student Success were introduced to all faculty and staff at Shelton State. The objective for the professional development was to allow College employees to see and experience the keys. After an entertaining opening session, breakout groups provided participants an opportunity to learn about the keys in unique ways. Best practices and ideas were gathered and shared.

These Keys to Student Success are integral to starting on the right path, staying the course, and successfully completing a program of study. Faculty and staff of Shelton State are asked to model these keys every day.

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SHELTON STATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACHIEVEMENT AND RESOURCES

The mission of the SOAR Institute of Shelton State Community College is to provide dedicated support to enhance the success of underprepared students.

**Key 1: Respect**

One key to becoming a successful college student is to treat yourself, peers, faculty, and staff with high regard. Portray self-worth through your dress and behavior. Acknowledge others' ideas, opinions, and thoughts by listening before responding.

Key 2: Class Attendance

One key to becoming a successful college student is to attend required class time, which includes arriving on time and remaining until dismissed. Notify your instructors concerning excused absences or tardies. See instructors to make up missed work. Be prepared by completing assignments and by participating in class activities. Use class time effectively and efficiently.

Key 3: Study Habits

One key to becoming a successful college student is by adopting good study habits. Keep up with assignments, use available resources, and get help when needed. Be aware of how you study best. These habits can make learning new information both easier and quicker and will make study time far more effective and efficient.

Key 4: Communication

One key to becoming a successful college student is to use the appropriate method of communication (i.e. face-to-face meetings, phone calls, e-mails). Keep lines of communication open with faculty, staff, and peers. Communication involves asking questions, listening to understand others, observing, verifying information received, and sharing ideas. Use standard English in written and oral communication. Through communication, collaboration and cooperation occur.

Key 5: Time Management

One key to becoming a successful college student is to plan and manage how to spend each day, week, and month to achieve desired goals effectively. Maintaining a daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly calendar is essential to managing time. Make a list of what needs to be accomplished, prioritize this list, and plan accordingly.

The keys to becoming a successful college student are broad ideals embraced by Shelton State Community College. The College has high expectations for your success, and provides resources whereby you can learn and grow. We challenge you to demonstrate student responsibility by making the decisions and taking the necessary actions to achieve your goals. Helping you achieve your goals is our highest priority.

Personnel Spotlight

A Conversation with NorQuina Rieves

Each edition of *SOARING* features one SOAR staff member. This edition spotlights NorQuina Rieves who started her position as a Tutor Supervisor in August 2013.

What prompted you to apply for this position at Shelton State?

"At the time that this position was posted, I was working in Financial Aid as a temporary contract worker. I'd been praying for guidance and confirmation regarding if this place was where HE would have me to be. A short time later, this position was posted. The mission of the SOAR Institute immediately caught my attention. I began researching the different components of SOAR, its success, and the purpose of SOAR being established; I was sold. Additionally, the requirements and responsibilities of the position were in line with my passion for helping others succeed, and my goals concerning my professional development."

Where did you work before coming to Shelton State? What was your position? What did that job include? "I worked at Enterprifoure Holdings (Enterprise Rental Car) as a Management Assistant for 4 years prior to coming to Shelton State. Some of the responsibilities of that job included daily rental transactions, sales, customer service, account relations, rental conversions, repossessions, and fleet management. Additionally, I managed and operated the satellite office of the largest corporate account in our area. This opportunity came at the request of the account's owner and general management. It was an honor and a privilege to be chosen to serve in such a capacity."

Where did you attend college? What degree have you earned? "I attended The University of Alabama. I earned a B.S. in Commerce and Business Administration with a concentration in General Management and a Master of Arts in Advertising and Public Relations."

Tell us where you grew up and what led you to pursue this profession. "I was born and raised in Starkville, Mississippi. I grew up in an environment that stressed the importance of education, and I believe that led me to this profession. From home to church, there was great emphasis on the value of not only being educated, but also being able to help others learn. As both a student and a tutor, I was very active in my church's tutoring program. Upon graduating from UA, I gained employment with the University as their Commencement Specialist. It was a position that required great attention to detail and gave me the opportunity to work with the student population. Additionally, I served as the musical advisor for the University's Afro-American Gospel Choir, giving students another avenue for connecting with a resource person on campus. After leaving UA, I decided to take on the business world and began working with Enterprise. While this opportunity was aligned with my degree, it was not my passion. I am thankful for the many lessons learned in that season of my

life. However, I missed the interaction with students and the opportunities to be 'that' person and source of encouragement. I wanted to make a difference and be a positive impact on the lives of others. I knew that post-secondary was where I wanted to be, and the community college system was where I needed to be."

Tell us about your family. "I have the best family in the world. I am my mother's only child and my father's baby girl of six. I have five god sisters and one brother. I have two nieces and a nephew, the absolute joys of my heart. I am about to become a godmother this summer. Additionally, I am the mother of heaven's angel. My son, Isaiah, was stillborn in September of 2012."

What are some of your interests and hobbies? "My interests and hobbies include singing and theatre/performing arts. I have appeared in several community theatre shows with our very own Theatre Tuscaloosa and the Actor's Charitable Theatre. Additionally, I am very active within my church (The Oasis Baptist Church Love Fellowship) and music ministry."

What have been the most challenging and rewarding aspects of working at Shelton State? "The most challenging part of working at Shelton State has been the transition of environments, from the major university structure to community college. It's also been a challenge getting everyone to see the true value of what is done here. The most rewarding thing about this job is hearing the success stories of our students."

Is there any additional information you would like to share?

"After attending a recent conference, I have developed a new philosophy. Every day that I show up to work, I must show up as someone's hope. I feel that I have one of the best jobs ever, helping others. I get to be a walking, talking testimony of encouragement while instilling confidence and hope in those who may not necessarily receive that from anyone but me. I am an agent for change. I am here on purpose with a divine assignment to help others, and I would have it no other way. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve our students, this great institution, and our community. We have a dynamic team, and I look forward to great things to come."



NorQuina "Q." Rieves